

“LET THERE BE LIGHT”

—OR—

Why Primitive Baptists Do Not Fellowship Secret Orders

*“Wherefore I take you to record this day,
that I am pure from the blood of all men;
for I have not shunned to declare unto
you all the council of God.”—(Acts, xx,
26, 27.)*

Gai. 5²

—BY—

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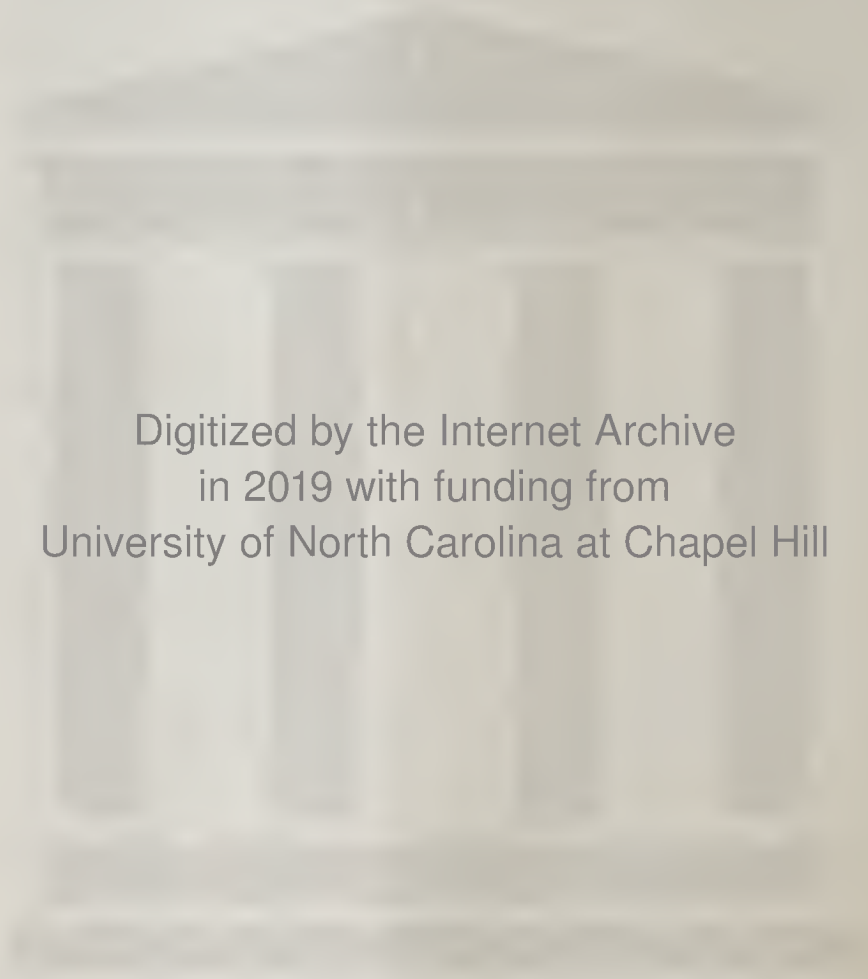
ATLANTA,

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*Price: Single Copy 25 Cents; \$2.50
per Dozen; \$15.00 per 100.*



In His Name,
A. V. SIMMS.



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Foreword

On the 24th day of June, 1717, four lodges of working masons—all that then existed in the south of England—met at the Appletree Tavern. Convent Garden, in the city of London, and formed the first Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons that was ever known to the world. “The first Grand Lodge, as the term is now technically understood, was formed in London, England, in 1717.” (Morris’ Dictionary, Art. Grand Lodges).

In the year 1736, or 19 years after the organization of the Lodge in London, in the city of Boston, the first Lodge was organized in America.

In 1786, or just 50 years after, the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association, convening in Bertie County North Carolina, declared it to “be disorderly to hold communion with a church member who frequented a masonic Lodge.” (Hassell’s History, page 706).

The Kehukee Association is the mother of all Associations in the South. She has held most sacredly to her first decision on this question, and maintains that position until this day, and God has blessed her order. All other Primitive Baptist Associations in the South, for the most part, have adhered to this kind of order and God has blessed them. Some few, it is true, have departed, but they have been promptly

dropped from the general body of Primitive Baptists.

Recently, however, there has appeared evidence of reverse action on the part of some among us, and it is to call attention to the dangers of this departure that this little book is sent forth.

In so-doing, it is far from the intention of the Author of this little work to assail Freemasonry as being unwilling for them to exercise the right that is due them as Amercian citizens in forming just such an order as to them seems proper and right.

Among the masonic people I have some as good friends as I have anywhere, and for whom I have the profoundest respect. I have carefully guarded my pen that I might not give needless offense to any. I am not contending against *Masons*, but *Masonry*, not men, but measures. I am freely willing that they, with all others, shall have what they desire. I would not hinder them if I could. But when the order invades the sanctity of my church, bringing with them doctrines in direct conflict with the doctrines of the church of God in all the ages past, and thus to overthrow the doctrines of Grace that have characterized the church of God I cannot remain passive and quiet and allow the church corrupted without a most faithful protest.

In the foregoing pages the reader will learn that I have examined Freemasonry only from a religious standpoint, just as I would examine

the doctrines of another church, and feel that it is my right and duty thus to do. The various religious creeds throughout the country are given to criticising the doctrines and practices of other denominations; then why should it be objectionable that the doctrines of secret institutions be examined as well?

No one realizes more than the Author of this little work that it is an unpopular thing to do. But I am not seeking popularity; for had this been my object in life I would never have united with the Primitive Baptist Church, nor could I ever have been persuaded to enter the sacred stand to defend the principles of that church. I have known all my life that, from a worldly stand-point, there is no church or other institution on earth quite so unpopular. When I first enlisted in the holy cause of God it was with a full understanding with my Lord that I was to suffer with Him, if I was to reign with Him, remembering His awful words: "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." I have found it so, and do not expect it ever to be otherwise in this life. But it is of supreme comfort to me as I pen these lines, that "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him."

The secret order craze has taken the world by storm. It is taking almost everything in its path, and it is high time that those who cannot go with them should make up their minds to suffer with Christ. All other denominations have been swept away in the tide of popular opinion. Heretofore the Primitive Baptist

church has stood against it like the rock of Gibraltar. But of late there is evidence of a change with some of them; they too, seeming so charmed with the glamor of public opinion and popularity with the wicked world. And if our church as a whole should yield to such beguilements of the wicked one she, too, will cease to be a burden-bearer with her Lord and shall prove herself unworthy to be called His disciples. But I am hoping for better things. I KNOW that some are going to remain true to Him, and that He shall find faith on the earth when He shall come again.

I plead for a patient and prayerful reading of the pages that follow, and for the moral and material support of all who really love the doctrines of Salvation by Grace. These, I am sure, comprise a very small per. cent of the present professing world. Few indeed believe these blessed old doctrines except Primitive Baptists, and they, too, will cease to believe them should the time come when she shall fellowship and endorse the doctrines as taught by Freemasonry, as well as many other oath-bound secret orders.

THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER I.

THE EFFECT OF MASONIC AFFILIATION AMONG PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS.

Throughout the Southern States it has been almost universal that Primitive Baptists have not tolerated secret orders, especially Freemasonry. It is proper therefore to examine the effects of such discipline. It is also true that in some of the Northwestern States, notably in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, the brethren there have lived in peaceful fellowship with these orders for many years. It is therefore important to compare results in cold figures and let the reader draw his own conclusions.

It has been broadly stated that Primitive Baptists in the North fellowshipped these institutions, but no one has ventured to publish the results until now, so far as I am aware. The telling of just half the truth has had an exceedingly bad effect upon our cause in Georgia. Let us see what the other half is.

In 1886 Elder Hassell wrote a most valuable history of the church of God, giving in detail the number of Associations, churches, membership and ministers in every State in the Union. In 1923 Elder Hanks did the same thing, giving out the same information. A comparison of the two reports, while it may break the heart of all true Primitive Baptists, it is important to know it and to profit by it.

Indiana
Hassell's History.
1886

No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
168	7953	83

Indiana
Hank's History.
1923

No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
74	5287	64

Illinois
Hassell's History.
1886

No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
155	3564	79

Illinois
Hank's History.
1923

No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
59	2558	37

Ohio
Hassell's History.
1886

No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
110	3319	76

Ohio
Hank's History.
1923

No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
50	1140	23

Adding these three Northern States together the reader will see that in this territory, where they have carried secret orders in peaceful fellow-

ship for a long time, that they have lost 250 churches, 5850 members and 159 ministers.

In the table blow we give a statement of three Southern States who have never carried secret orders in their fellowship. Mark the difference.

Alabama
Hassell's History.

1886		
No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
194	6342	40

Alabama
Hank's History.

1923		
No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
287	7025	110

Georgia
Hassell's History.

1886		
No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
287	8671	102

Georgia
Hank's History.

1923		
No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
312	14223	185

North Carolina
Hassell's History.

1886		
No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
256	9180	118

North Carolina
Hank's History.

1923		
No. Churches	No. Members	No. Ministers
305	11144	129

It will be seen from the above reports of these two noted and reliable historians, that in the three Northern States mentioned, and where secret orders have for many years been tolerated, that during the past 37 years, they have lost 40 per cent of their members, 47 per cent of their ministers and 65 per cent of their churches. At this rate, may I ask, how long will it take for our denomination in those States, under secret order conditions, to become extinct? Are not these figures strongly significant without further comment?

But the importance of these figures do not stop here. The statistics in the three Southern States, as given above, show that in these States where secret orders have never been tolerated, the membership has increased 20 per cent; the number of churches have increased 31 per cent and the number of ministers have increased 43 per cent.

Let my reader keep these figures in mind as he listens to the argument so often made that as "nearly everybody are members of some secret order, Primitive Baptists are forced to take them". It appears to me that such an argument could only come from one who has lost faith in the promise that God will "add to the church such as should be saved". They seem to forget that God can and does, wean away His people from the world and lead them to the house and worship of God. They have forgotten that "Except the Lord build the city they labor in vain that build it". (Psalms 127:1).

It is a noted fact among all observant pastors of the Primitive Baptist faith that the greater part of our membership are drawn from among other denominations. Why is this? The answer is simple. Other churches in their mad race for popularity with the world and for numerical strength have ceased to require evi-

dences of a renewed heart of their applicants; they not only carry secret orders, but they conform to the world to that extent that the unconverted may become members without any sacrifice of their worldliness or worldly pleasures.

And thus the charge against the Primitive Baptists that they are 100 years behind the times inures to the benefit of our people, because thousands among the various worldly denominations, who are Christians, have become sick unto death with their surroundings, and are looking for a people whose God is the Lord, who worship in Spirit and in truth, and who have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness". The Primitive Baptists of the South have been content to remain behind the times, and so doing, have greatly preserved their spirituality and simplicity and thus have kept an open door for all God's people of other faiths who become sick and tired of materialism and worldly formality. This is why Southern Primitive Baptists have gained in number.

For the first few years after the division between the Progressives and Old Liners (so-called) in Georgia, those called Progressives enjoyed a most unusual growth in numbers, receiving many more members than did the Old Liners. But the tendency towards secret orderism has stopped the flow of members and now the reverse is true—the Old Liners, during the last two years in Georgia, has greatly exceeded us in the reception of new members. Why is it? It is the same answer. The Old Liners are standing manfully in defense of the spirituality of their churches, and when one of their members knowingly violates the discipline of the church and the word of God by uniting with these worldly institutions they do not wait to "love him out of it" as some of our breth-

ren insists, but they promptly require him to cease his affiliation either with the institution or with the church.

And by thus keeping themselves clear of these things the door is kept open for all others in other quarters who are sick and tired of the world. But as these same dissatisfied Christians look towards us (the Progressives) they see that some of our leaders are wanting to receive the very things that they so much desire to be free from that there is little or no inducement to come to us.

We need to learn anew the lesson that God never intended that His blessed old church should be popular with the world. Its doctrines, its practice and the daily lives of its members must be separate and distinct; and all, whether members or churches, should live to the glory of God.

I have seen these things for quite awhile, and have tried faithfully to warn our people of the dangers before us. I have known all the while that God's people cannot disobey Him without suffering the penalty of His displeasure and the withdrawal of His Spirit. But my warnings have not been very well received by some, who seem bent on seeking adhesion to worldly things, and some good brethren who once gave the same warning by tongue and pen have said that I have turned out to be a "trouble maker", and in this way have caused others to become somewhat afraid of me. But I forgive them and am praying for them.

CHAPTER II

WHY ALL OTHER RELIGIOUS ORDERS PROSPER WITH SECRET ORDERS WHILE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS DO NOT

We need not remind the reader that the dear Lord makes a very broad distinction between His own dear church and the religious world. "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," says our Lord. In speaking of others He has said through His apostle: "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world and the world heareth them. We are of God." (I. Jno. iv, 5). Let the reader find the difference between "they" and "we," and the question is solved. There are hundreds of other things that other professing churches are doing and are prospering in them, any one of which would kill the church of God, because they are "THEY" and we are "WE". "THEY" sprinkle for baptism and are prospering in it, why cannot "WE" do so? Cannot Primitive Baptists understand this? Do "WE" not know that if "WE" were to give up baptism as it is taught in the bible and adopt sprinkling instead that God would withdraw His Spirit from us and we would die? The same is true of secret orders, and God will not allow us to have them any more than He would be willing for us to change His law on baptism or any other subject. Secret orders "are of the world" even as all professed churches which believe in works for salvation. Freemasonry is a religion—one that is said to save the sinner "From the Lodge below to the Lodge above". All Arminian or-

ganizations believe and teach that sinners are saved by their own works just as masons believe. Is it a matter of surprise that other churches should prosper with them since there is no essential difference between the Lodge and the church?

But no organization that believes in salvation by grace can afford to fellowship a church believing in works for eternal life without compromising the principles of grace, and to compromise means death. God will withdraw His Spirit and His blessings from His people when they repudiate the doctrines of grace by which they are saved, for when we leave God He leaves us, and when we draw nigh to Him He draws nigh to us.

But God cannot withdraw His Spirit from those who never had it, therefore it makes no difference if they should pattern altogether after the ungodly world. The truth is the possession of the Spirit of God by any worldly religious organization would disrupt and confuse them. The withdrawal of the Spirit therefore, if such were possible, could not effect them adversely because "they are of the world". Of course I will be understood to mean that this is true only of the organization, for I am sure that there are thousands of God's people who have been ensnared into such churches, who have been taught that "salvation is of the Lord", who daily plead for the leadings and blessings of the Holy Spirit.

But of this we shall have more to say in another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

IS FREEMASONRY A RELIGION?

To this question there are many divergent answers. Ask the average mason as you meet him

on the Streets and his answer will be "No". He thus speaks because, although he has passed through the degrees, he has learned but little about them, and in many instances he knows absolutely nothing about religion.

But if we would get the truth we must not trust to the judgment of the ignorant rabble among the fraternity, but inquire of their highest officials and men of prominence, and to some of these we direct the readers attention. We would not at this time undertake to intrude upon what is called masonic secrets, but would make such quotations as may be necessary from books written for the general information of the public and which may be found in any first class book store.

In the "Mystic Tie", written by Albert G. Mackey, a man wearing perhaps more masonic suffixes to his name than any other man in America, on page 30 says:

"When we are asked, 'What is Freemasonry?' we answer, in the first place, that it is a science which engages in the search after divine truth.
* * * * * Freemasonry is then, also, a religious institution; the very science which it inculcates is the science of religion."

On page 32 of the same book he declares:

"Freemasonry is emphatically a religious institution. It teaches the existence of God. It points to the celestial canopy above where is the Eternal Lodge and where He presides. *It instructs us in the way to reach the portals of that distant Temple.*"

"By the exercise of the duties of Masonry (1) the wise may increase their knowledge of God in all His best perfections, and thereby (2) grow still more wise unto eternal salvation: (3) the pure in heart may be advancing in the Divine likeness, and they who walk in the paths

of the just with zeal and activity will find it (masonry) *as the light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*"

"All the ceremonies of our order are prefaced and terminated with prayer, because masonry is a religious institution". Mackey's Lexicon of Freemasonry, Fifth edition, page 369.

"The truth is that masonry is undoubtedly a religious institution." Mackey's Masonic Jurisprudence.

In a succeeding chapter I shall have need of more of these enlightening quotations, but enough has been quoted already to establish the fact that masonry is a religion.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT KIND OF RELIGION?

Strictly speaking there are, and can be but two kinds of religion—the true and the false. The first had its origin with God, the Father, and is consummated through the Lord Jesus Christ. The second is of satan, imbelished in its outward appearance so as to appeal to the vanities of the human heart, whether in the unbeliever or in God's own dear child. Any religion therefore, that has not God as its divine Author, and the Lord Jesus as its high and holy Executor can not be of God.

Freemasonry repudiates Jesus Christ. Some of the most ignorant among them deny it, to be sure, but this does not effect the facts as we shall see further on.

It is well known that Freemasonry was instituted by the Jews. It is also a historical fact that no Gentile was ever admitted into its membership for many years after its organization. When they were admitted they had to accept it as it was. And as the Jews have always re-

jected Christ, so it follows, that in all their official prayers they have purposely avoided the use of the name of Jesus Christ. That it is regarded as a violation of masonic law to use that blessed Name in a masonic lodge we cite the attention of the reader to a quotation from a masonic journal, *The Masonic Mirror and Keystone* as of their issue of June 29, 1859:

“Terre Haute, Ind., June 15, 1859.

Dear Sir, and Brother:

“It would give me, and a goodly number of brethren, great pleasure if you would discuss in your valuable and wide-spread *Mirror and Keystone* the following question:

“Is it masonic to have a strictly Christian prayer at opening and closing a Lodge, such prayer as all Masons cannot conscientiously join?

“I suppose you have answered this question often, but not in your paper since I became a reader of it. At least I do not recollect.

“The circumstances which caused me to ask this question are these:

“Several of our brethren, who are Christian ministers, are, whenever present at the opening or closing of a Lodge, requested by the W. M. to offer prayer, which request they always comply with, closing their prayers with ‘for the sake of Jesus Christ’, which form of prayer, although obnoxious to brethren of the Jewish faith, is still adhered to, in spite of their protests, whenever one of the minister brothers chances to be in the Lodge at the opening or closing of same.

“Our Jewish brethren contend that the prayer, on opening or closing, is a part of the ceremony of opening or closing a Lodge, and as such—a masonic ceremony—it ought to be masonic, i. e., of universal application.

“I have no doubt, dear sir, that you will handle this

question which involves such a great masonic principle, with your usual ability, supported by ancient and modern authority.”

(Signed) C. A.

REPLY

“The question submitted to us by our correspondent, is one that has long been settled by enlightened masonic opinions, as well as by the constitutions of Masonry, and the reverend brethren, who, in their invocations in a Masonic Lodge, address their petitions to any other than the Supreme Being, the Creator of Heaven and earth, violate the plainest principles of Masonry. It is altogether superfluous to reply to the question, because the prayers referred to conflict with the universality of Masonry, which must be patent to every Mason who has the least knowledge of the principles upon which the Masonic order is based. It not only betrays an unwarrantable ignorance of the ‘ancient charges’, but also of the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple. We refer our correspondent to the prayer of Solomon as ancient authority. We refer him to the ‘ancient charges’ as modern authority, and will only remark, that no Freemason, be he divine or layman, of whatever denomination or persuasion, if he rightly understands the Masonic Art, will give offense to any brother in a Masonic Lodge by the obtrusion of his particular religious faith, as, thereby, instead of drawing his brother closer in the bonds of union, which ought to be the paramount object, he causes him to remove to a distance, and thus destroy the intent and object of Freemasonry. A Masonic Lodge is a representation of the Universe, in which the *good* and *true* of every nation are found, and over which God, the Father of All, reigns. We leave our correspondent to form his own conclusions as to how far “harmony”, which is the very basis of Masonry, would exist, if, in the Lodge, each brother would be permitted to pray audibly according to the religious faith which he possessed. Although Freemasonry em-

braces all the virtues, every injunction, command and precept contained in the Volume of Inspiration, and every Freemason is expected to, or ought to live in obedience to them, yet the subject of religion in any of its varied forms, is not permitted, nor can it be sanctioned in a Masonic Lodge. All invocations in a Masonic Lodge must be addressed to God and to God only. Anything that conflicts with the universality of Masonry is wrong."

Which is to say that any use of the blessed Saviour's Name in a masonic lodge is wrong! How do you like it brother? It has long since "been settled, by enlightened masonic opinion" that Jesus must not enter in, but must be left at the door until his servant (?) returns. Get it? To take the blessed Name of Chirst into the lodge is an "obtrusion", and obtrusion means—according to Webster—"thrusting upon others by force". Therefore to use the name of Jesus in a masonic lodge is to thrust Him upon them by FORCE, and such "intrusion" is met by hot resentment from this renowned editor. This, I am sure will forever settle the question in the mind of all who really want the truth about the matter. But I want to be fair, and will state that I have been told by reliable masons that, where there are no Jews in the Lodge—none but Gentiles—that they sometimes use the name of Christ in their prayers. I have been told this by so many good men that I am quite sure it is true. But even when it is done under these conditions it is not in accord with the masonic form of prayer given them in their rituals and consequently is in violation of masonic law, and they who do it are guilty of disloyalty to the fraternity.

CHAPTER V.

IT PROMISES ETERNAL SALVATION TO ALL WHO ARE FAITHFUL TO AND ZEALOUS IN THE FRATERNITY.

In the ceremonies contained in the initiation of a new member in the "Apprentice Degree", the applicant is instructed by the Master Mason as follows:

"The common gavel is an instrument made use of by operative Masons to break off the corners of rough stones, to better fit them for the builder's use; but we, as Free and Accepted Masons, use it for the more noble and glorious purpose of divesting our hearts and consciences of all the vices and superfluities of life; *thereby fitting our minds as living and lively stones for that Spiritual Building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*" (Bernard's Light on Masonry, page 32.)

Here it is plainly stated that salvation is by the "common gavel" and not by the blood of Christ as we have always believed and preached. Have we been preaching falsely? We make this admission the very moment we accept the heretical statement above, and we admit we believe it when we show a willingness to tolerate it in our churches.

In the same degree the candidate is charged "to put on the checkline of truth, which will infallibly direct you to persue that straight and narrow path *which ends in the full enjoyment of the Grand Lodge above.*" (Bernard's Light on Masonry, page 33.) Is this not reaching the Grand Lodge above by obedience to masonic law rather than faith in the blood of Christ, as we have been taught?

The candidate, as he is inducted into the degree known as the "Thrice Illustrious Order

of the Cross", swears: "*I do hereby accept of and forever will consider the Cross and mark of this Order as my only hope.*" Thus the Christian—if such he may be called—who takes the obligations of this Order, makes the solemn pledge that he will substitute the mark and cross of this order for the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Could anything be more blasphemous? And what can one be worth to the church of God when he imbibes another faith which repudiates the faith of the church of which he is a member?

Once more. In the degree of Grand Pontiff, or Sublime Scotch Masonry the candidate hears the gladsome news that "the satin Fillet, with the Twelve Stars" (which he wears about his head) "*will procure the entrance of those who wear it into the celestial Jerusalem.*" (Bernard's Light on Masonry page 259).

I could continue these quotations time almost without limit, but it nauseates me as I write it, and I am quite sure the Christian reader has enough of it.

But the question is, what are Primitive Baptists going to do about it? Are they going to fellowship Freemasonry, with all these anti-christian and blasphemous doctrines? I cannot think so, for when they repudiate the principles of the Christian faith, they throw insult into the very face of Jesus Christ and make an unholy compromise with hell itself. No wonder that wherever they have done so they have gone to their death. No more grave responsibilities ever confronted any denomination of Christians than that which confronts the Primitive Baptists of this country.

It is no trouble to get our memberships over the State to withdraw from other religious orders holding to other doctrines differing from

our own, though less objectionable than masonic doctrines. For these, though many of them rely upon a system of works for salvation, they *do* have a Christ. They do not ignore Him altogether as do the masons. Why then cannot we decide to remain as our church has always been and receive masons as we do other religious organizations only as they relinquish their membership from the lodge?

The great trouble with Primitive Baptists in this country is that they have never known that masons carry such heresies. I am sure that they still desire to remain pure in doctrine and practice, and are not willing to surrender the blessed old doctrines of grace that they have always loved. But the trouble has been, and is at this very time, that secret orders are so popular with the world that no one has desired to jeopardize his standing with the world, or especially so since the heresies referred to and proven, has not been discussed but very little. This is my reason for undertaking to throw light upon the subject and to vindicate the discipline of Primitive Baptists.

Not alone do these heresies stand in open conflict with the doctrine of the Bible and the faith of all Christians who really believe in Jesus Christ, but the applicant, if he continues with the order after he has known the obligations and teachings of that degree, proves that he has departed from his former faith and is now an acknowledged heretic.

As he comes first into the lodge, taking the Apprentice Degree, he enters almost as nude as he was born, blindfolded (hoodwinked) with a Cable Tow, (rope) around his neck, he is led by the Seniour Warden before the Master of the Lodge, and is asked by him: "Whence have you come and whither are you travelling"? to which the candidate answers: (and imagine him to be

a Primitive Baptist) "From the West, and travelling to the East." The Master again inquires: "Why do you leave the West and travel to the East?" The candidate answers: "IN SEARCH OF LIGHT." There you are. Think of him not only as a Primitive Baptist, but think of him as a minister of the gospel!!! One who, years ago, professed to have received divine light from Him who is the Authtor of ALL light—one who claims to have been commissioned of God to declare the power of that true light "that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and to lead others into the light, now confederating in a common brotherhood with a Jewish institution that declares Christ to be an imposter, and seeking light from such a corrupted source!!! And it may be that the brother (?) holding the other end of the rope is a Jew, and an open and avowed enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Could anything be more degrading to the high profession of a minister of Christ than to see him thus bartering his ministerial dignity for a morsel of masonic pottage?

Is such a man a safe leader for those who really desire to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus? If he has proven himself to be untrue to the blessed Jesus while behind a masonic screen, will it do to trust him as a leader in Zion? It is often true that after taking the first degree in masonry the applicant never appears again before another lodge, not being able to reconcile what he saw and heard with his own enlightened conscience. Such are to be pittied and excused. But when any man among Primitive Baptists, who witnesses the horid things as I have described them, then takes another degree, then another, and then defends his conduct before his brethren he should be discarded by the church as hopeless.

CHAPTER VI.

MORE ABOUT MASONIC RELIGION.

It is an acknowledged rule, not alone among Primitive Baptists, but among all other religious denominations as well, that when a member is received from another religious order he is expected and required to cease his connection and relationship from the church from which he came. To fail in such requirement would be to extend fellowship to that particular church, and that would be to compromise the principles of the church with which he has come to live. This is well understood by all religious sects and creeds and could not be otherwise.

If therefore, the Primitive Baptists church should receive a member from the Methodist church, and if such an one should request that he still retain membership with the Methodist, so that he could be a member at both churches, what would be done about it? Would he not be told to go back to his former church and remain there until he was ready to give it up? How could he reasonably expect membership in two different churches which are unlike, both in doctrine and practice? And why should Primitive Baptists be expected to discriminate in favor of Freemasonry? Have we not shown, to the satisfaction of the reader that Freemasonry is, not only a religion that purports to save a sinner by works, but that it is done without a Christ? If to receive a member from a Methodist church without requiring him to relinquish his membership there would bind us in fellowship with the Methodist church, would not the same be true with regard to Freemasonry? If not, why not?

How can Primitive Baptists tolerate such heresies without a complete surrender of all

that has ever been so sweet and sacred to them? Are we, as a denomination, ready to compromise? Why should one who really loves our Lord and His blessed teachings wish to still cling to such blasphemy? If he really wishes to follow the blessed Jesus would he not most willingly, gladly, voluntarily give up everything that conflicts with the teaching of Christ? But if he will not do so what shall be done about it? Shall we allow him to come in and remain with the hope that we can "love him out of it", as some of our brethren insist that we shall? If so why should we not deal with one of another church the same way? Why not take a Methodist brother into our fellowship with the hope that we may "love him out" of his Methodism, and failing, allow him to retain membership at both places?

But it will doubtless be argued that Freemasonry is not a church. WELL it has never yet been admitted by Primitive Baptist that the Methodists are a church. The best admission we have ever made or can make is, that it is a religious institution composed of good people. Such is masonry. While the one claims to be a church and the other does not, yet they both claim a religion that saves the sinner by works, the only material difference between them is, that one worships in the name of Jesus Christ, while the other, in order to be world-wide, has refused the name of Christ in their worship, as we have already proven by their own authors.

After all, it is not a question of Masonry or of Methodism, but whether we are ready to surrender the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. To receive either, and allow them to retain their memberships where they formerly were would bring us into fellowship with that order, whatever it might be. This is so apparent that I re-

gard it as useless to persue this phase of the subject further.

Underneath the whole matter lies the simple fact that this is an age of secret orderism. It is so popular with the world and all worldly denominations that all who are weak in the faith are willing to close their eyes to the facts, and the awful results of such a step, and, ostrichlike, bury their heads in the sand, supposing that it secures safety to their bodies. But to all such they are due to wake up to the awful realities of such a course.

We have men and women in our church, who though they may acknowledge in their own hearts the truths that I am now presenting to them, yet they have friends and kin-folks belonging to these orders, and to preserve their good will, are willing to take these heresies and go on with them in the church. Some sister whose husband is a mason is unwilling for these matters to be discussed at all, and especially to refuse to fellowship masonry, and why? There can be but one answer, and that answer is she loves her husband better than she loves her Christ. Some fathers who, though they do not want masonry in the church, yet will permit it rather than give offense to his son who is a mason. And so it has come to the point that we must decide which we love the better—our kin-folks or our Redeemer.

Our Master taught us that “No man that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred fold * * * and in the world to come life everlasting.” (Mark X:29, 30.) It was the test of true discipleship that Jesus Himself employed, that if one should love his kin-folk better than they did their Saviour they were not worthy of Him, and could not be his dis-

ciple. The same test is now upon us. I have shown already that we cannot hold to, and fellowship Freemasonry and fellowship Jesus Christ at the same time. It seems awful to contemplate, but it is God's own test by which His church shall be purified. And it may be, in the providence of God, that He has allowed this very question to come up for adjustment, in this very manner, to test our loyalty to Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

BEING YOKED WITH UNBELIEVERS

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth, with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the Living God. (II Cor. vi:16).

A recent writer, trying to show that Primitive Baptists should affiliate with masons, took the position that Paul, in the above text, only meant that we should not have unbelievers in the church. But Paul had reference to no such thing. The Bible abundantly teaches that we should not tolerate unbelievers in the church, but this is not what Paul was writing about in this instance.

Did Paul mean to teach that all believers should come out of the church if there be unbelievers in it? If the writer to whom I refer is correct, he did, for Paul said: “Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.” II Cor. vi:17).

Paul meant—and he was writing by inspira-

tion—that God’s children should come out of any and all organizations or brotherhoods that deliberately receive and retain unbelievers.

One man, in conversation with me, said that this did not refer to masonry, for masonry requires all applicants to profess a belief in a Supreme Being. But we should remember that while masonry requires a belief in a Supreme Being it excludes the name of Jesus. This being true, the devil could easily become a mason, according to James, for he said: “Thou believest that there is one God: thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble.” (James II;19).

If we intend to obey the word of the Lord, we should ever stand aloof from masonry, as well as all other institutions of men who do not spiritually believe in the Lord Jesus, for such are unbelievers. Some Primitive Baptists who belong to the Lodge claim that they do not believe the masonic doctrine of salvation by works. But he subscribes to it, and how do we know that he believes our doctrines? It is a fact that he cannot believe two opposing doctrines at the same time, and if he outwardly subscribes to both he is a hypocrite. It is best to put him to the test. If he really loves the doctrines of the church he will give up his masonry. If he quits the church for the Lodge it would be conclusive evidence that he loves the Lodge and its doctrines better.

CHAPTER VIII.

IT IS AN IDOLATROUS RELIGION.

Sun worship is much older than Freemasonry, and that popular institution, having rejected Jesus Christ as unworthy of their devotions, have adopted the ancient paganistic form of sun

worship. See what the Bible says about it: "And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and behold at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the East, and they worshipped the sun toward the East. (Ezekiel, VIII;16).

What was God's attitude towards this idolatry? We can learn from His own word. "Therefore will I deal in fury; mine eyes shall not spare; neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." (Ezekiel, VIII;18).

When those ancient idolators worshipped some visible earthly object, they claimed to be worshipping the deity that the object represented. For instance, when the Egyptians worshipped the sacred bull, they claimed to be worshipping the god, or diety, that the bull represented.

Now the masonic Lodge has an officer whose title is "Worshipful Master". The word worshipful means, entitled to worship, or worthy to be worshipped. (Try your dictionary on this.) Robert Morris, who ought to know what he was talking about, said, "The Worshipful Master himself is a representative of the sun."

Thus we have the sad spectacle of masons, either consciously, or ignorantly, worshipping the sun through the Worshipful Master. "The three Lodge officers, who virtually are the Lodge, each represents the sun, rising, shining or setting. * * * The Master and each Warden represents the sun, and the Master is called Worshipful, and the sun is worshipped in each of the three. The Entered Apprentice degree opens Freemasonry in sun worship." (Freemasonry Illustrated.) In the work from which

the last quotation is taken, we have the following remarkable description of a lodge meeting, when the truth of the quotation is proven:

(Worshipful Master) "The Junior station in the Lodge?"

(Treasurer) "In the South, Worshipful."

(Worshipful Master) "Brother Junior Warden, why in the South, and your duties there?"

(Junior Warden) "As the sun in the South at high meridian is the glory and beauty of the day, so stands the Junior Warden in the South to call the craft from labor to refreshments.", etc.

(Worshipful Master) "The Senior Wardens station in the Lodge?"

(Junior Warden) "In the West, Worshipful."

(Worshipful Master) "Brother Senior Warden, why in the West, and your duties there?"

(Senior Warden) "As the sun is in the West at the close of the day, so stands the Senior Warden in the West to assist the Worshipful Master in opening and closing his lodge", etc.

(Worshipful Master) "The Worshipful Master's station in the Lodge?"

(Senior Warden) "In the East, Worshipful".

Worshipful Master: "Why in the East and his duties there?"

Senior Warden: "As the sun rises in the East to open and govern the day, so rises the Worshipful Master in the East (Master arises) to open and govern his Lodge."

Mackey's Ritualist, in explaining the number in the Master Mason's degree, says:

"The number twelve was celebrated as a mystical number in the ancient system of sun worship, of which * * * masonry is a philosophical development."

The same authority says: "Among the Hindoos, the rite of circumambulation was always

practiced as a religious ceremony, and a Brahmin, on rising from his bed in the morning, having first adored the sun, while directing his face to the east, then proceeds by the way of the South to the West, exclaiming at the same time, 'I follow the course of the sun.' " (Mackey's Ritualist, page 26.)

Pierson's "Ancient Traditions of Freemasonry", says: "It is evident that the sun, either as an object of worship, or of symbolization, has always formed an important part of both the mysteries and system of Freemasonry."

Is it not amazing that masonic authors should so coolly and boldly affirm the identity of the dark, bloody and polluted heathen mysteries. Apparently so anxious to establish the claim of "ANCIENT" Freemasonry, that they unhesitatingly connect it with the ancient order of sun worship—a worship, as we have already seen—that God condemned and punished! ! But from the masonic standpoint this was a necessity, because masonry must be world-wide, and not to have the form of heathen worship would be to render the Hindoo intelligible for membership. The idea seemed to prevail with the founders of masonry that it would be easier to obtain the consent of Christians (?) to abandon the name of Jesus Christ in their forms of worship than it would be to get the Hindoo to abandon his heathenish sun worship. And in this they have guessed well, for nearly the whole of Christendom, as we have seen, have almost bodily in their lodge worship, have bowed to this unholy dictum, as slaves to popular opinion.

We are satisfied that there are thousands of masons who do not mean to be idolatrous, but they are maintaining idolatry just the same. Surely when God's children, of whatever de-

nomination, when they see that this is true, they will give up the Lodge.

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” (I John v;21). As long as this injunction remains of force Primitive Baptists will be justified in requiring all their members to stand aloof from lodgeism.

CHAPTER IX.

AS A CHARITABLE INSTITUTION

That there are many noble hearted men connected with the Lodge who are noted for their kindness for those in distress, we know, and we are very glad to make the statement. But the Lodge did not make them so—did not require it of them. Such men are to be found in all organizations, and in no organizations at all.

A few such men in this city, belonging to the Lodge, conceived the idea of erecting a hospital for the benefit of crippled children, and with the aid of a generous public—good men and women of all ranks, “Tag Days”, etc., they have made a most wonderful success, and are doing a great deal of good. *But there is nothing in masonic law* that requires it of them. But the Lodge gets all the honor, and having rejected Jesus Christ, are robbing Him of the honor that belongs exclusively to Him.

Let me illustrate: In a certain distant city there exists a newspaper that is anti-Christ, anti-Christian and anti-everything that is holy and good. Whenever a case of public suffering comes up this paper opens its columns for subscriptions and the contributions flow in. Two-thirds of the donors, no doubt, are Christian men and women inspired by the love of Christ; but mark you, a Christless newspaper gets the glory and not the Saviour.

And you can take the benevolence (so-called) of all these secret fraternities and Christ is not acknowledged nor thought of, for He was outlawed at the beginning. Some of the members of the Lodge are Christians and give because of the love of Christ in their hearts, but Christ does not get the glory; instead a Christless institution gets it all. All Christian giving when not done in the name of Christ is robbing the Son of God of His glory. "*Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*" (I Cor. x;31.)

The author of this little book once took a member of the masonic fraternity into his home to care for who was in every way dependent, having nothing in the world, and who was in the last stages of Tuberculosis. He often chided me for my views of lodgeism, but he was converted before he died, but the awful oath he had taken would not allow him to express himself as he wished.

It all came about in the following manner: He told me one day that if he could only get to his Lodge at Mosley's Hall, in Madison County Florida, he would get all the help he needed. I told him he should go. Accordingly I furnished conveyance, sending my brother to care for him. They were gone three days and returned empty-handed, and very much embarrassed. *He was behind with his dues* and his importunities fell upon deaf ears. I cared for him till he died—dying in my arms, and I buried him without masonic help.

Such is masonic charity. And such is the charity of all insurance companies, which do not claim to be charitable institutions at all. Insurance companies will pay you if you keep your dues paid, and there is nothing in masonic law that requires more than this.

CHAPTER X.

DARKNESS AND SECRECY AN EVIDENCE OF EVIL.

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. (Jno. III; 19, 20, 21).

These words, as they fall from the Saviour's lips, are so true that they need no comment. The very thought of evil suggests secrecy in every phase of human life. But if no evil is intended there is no thought, or desire for secrecy; but on the contrary, one would prefer that all men might read the inmost thoughts of the heart and the good intentions there, “that it might be made manifest that his deeds are wrought in God.” Secrecy, therefore, bears the ear-marks of evil.

Suppose a minister, while receiving a new member into his church, should require the applicant to kneel at the altar, half dressed, blind-folded, and swear by the Eternal God that he would obey all the laws and regulations of the church, and forever keep the secrets of the church in his own breast at the sacrifice of his own life? Would not there arise a voluntary shudder upon all who witnessed the ceremony? And if such thing was ever repeated would not the minister prefer to do so in secret? And if such be all right in a masonic Lodge why should it be condemned in a church? The minister who would do such thing would have to do so in secret to escape the condemnation of an enlightened, but enraged public. May not this

be one of the reasons why masons go behind the screen for such performances?

Secrecy is contrary to the example and teaching of Jesus. Just before His crucifixion Jesus used an expression which covered all His previous life in the flesh. He said: "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; *and in secret have I said nothing.* (John xviii;20).

What lover of Jesus would wish to join a secret society when he knows that Jesus would not join it, if he were on earth in the flesh?

Paul very bitterly denounced secrecy: "Have no fellowship for the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame to even speak of those things which are done of them in secret." (Eph. v;11,12).

Adam and Eve never secreted themselves until they were guilty of evil. And their secrecy proves also they were *conscious* of the evils of which they were guilty. Why may not the same be true of all secret societies? Does not their secrecy imply that they are not only evil, but that the founders, if not the communicants, *know* that it is evil? And if they know otherwise—that is, if they knew that everything about it was good, would they not want everybody to know it? Would they not wish to come to the light with it, "that it might be made manifest that their deeds are wrought in God"? Jesus said they would. Who is it can be certain, or even satisfied that deeds are righteous when those who go behind closed doors and swear to keep secret all that may be done?

Some of our masonic friends try to offset this argument by saying that secrets are a necessity—that every family has its secrets. This answer is just so poor it is hardly worth an answer.

One does not have to take an oath of secrecy on entering a neighbor's home. And if it should be required you would be sure to feel that there was something wrong in that home. No, the home is not a secret society.

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid," says Jesus. But He said it to His disciples, not to the unbelieving world. He did not say it to those who had never seen this precious light. Neither would I throw one straw in the masonic machinery that would cause them to think that I was unwilling for them to exercise whatever rights they might feel were their own, in the management of their own affairs. But the main object of this little book is to reach God's people—those who have received the light, and plead with them to do as Jesus taught—never put that light under a bushel, never cover it with sworn secrecy, but put it on a candle-stick, "that it may give light to all that are in the house." Keeping the light on a candle-stick is for the purpose "that others may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." Certainly then, one is not glorifying his Father which is in Heaven while in a masonic lodge.

CHAPTER XI.

IT IS ANTI-CHRIST.

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-Christ, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." (1 John, ii; 22,23).

Thus it is taught that the Father and the Son

are inseparable. No one may disown the Son without dishonouring the Father.

Do not the Jews dishonor the Son? Did they not condemn Him to the cruel death of the cross? And have we not shown that the masonic institution is an off-spring of the Jews? and that His name is not to be found in their anti-Christian prayers? Is this not anti-Christ according to the above teaching? "I and my Father are one."

If therefore it is anti-Christ to be a mason should the church tolerate it? Does it mitigate the offense for a confessed Christian to unite with them? "Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father." The "Whosoever", it seems to me, would mean an Old Baptist as well as a Jew or a mason.

Is not Jesus Christ the Stone which the builders rejected? (Ps. cxiii;22. *Matt.* xxi;42). Is He not the Foundation Stone, elect and precious? "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God: Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a sure foundation." (Isaiah, xxiii;16). Surely it will be admitted joyfully by all Christians whose minds have not been poisoned by Jewish teaching that Christ is that Stone referred to. But no mason dare say this is true in a masonic lodge, even though that mason should be a Primitive Baptist.

And reject the Foundation and the whole building must crumble to nought. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. xi;3). If a Primitive Baptist can connect himself with a common brotherhood who rejects Jesus Christ, must he not as a natural result, reject all the blessed teachings of Christ, if he is to remain loyal to Freemasonry? And if he does so only *professedly*, and not in heart, would it be honouring to God to retain

him in the church? And if she does so upon her own responsibility does she not become partaker of his sin? "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (II John, 10:11).

But if any Primitive Baptist cannot feel it to be right to exclude one "simply for being a mason" surely he would be willing to exclude him for heresy; and if such an one should claim that he does not believe the heretical doctrines taught by masonry, yet retains membership with them would not a church be justified in excluding him for hypocrisy? Is he not an anti-Christ when he pleads for membership with an order who are anti-Christ? What can such a man be worth to the church of God? If he is sincere in his masonic profession he can but be a hypocrite in the church, and if he is sincere in the church he is a hypocrite in the Lodge, for as we have many times proven already, the church stands for Jesus Christ and His blessed teaching, while the Lodge rejects Him.

CHAPTER XII.

GENERAL COMMENT.

Our Lord has said: "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Matt. XII;30).

Can it be truthfully said that an institution that will not allow the name of Jesus used in their official prayers is "with" Him? If not, does it not follow that they "scatter abroad" and are his enemies? Does not Jesus here teach that if a thing is not right that it is wrong? Certainly a thing is wrong when it is not right. And if it was right would there be any objection

to praying at any time and anywhere in His Name? And is this not all true of Primitive Baptists while they are members of the order? And if it is true is it right for the church to carry that wrong?

MASONS DISHONOUR CHRIST.

We are not speaking of them as individuals—not of men, but of measures.

The Saviour said: “All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him.” Do the Jews to whom Jesus was then speaking, Honour the Son? If not do they honour the Father? Did He not say “I and my Father are one?” And since masons are governed by Jewish theology do they not dishonour both the Father and the Son? And when a Primitive Baptist is found in that crowd is he not equally guilty? And if his church knows all this, and continues him in her fellowship is she not as guilty as any?

“I honour the Father and ye do dishonour me” says Jesus. And again: “If I honour myself my honour is nothing; it is my Father that honoureth me.” Well, if the Father honours the Son will he honour an institution that dishonors Him? And if a church member connects himself with a brotherhood that dishonours Jesus Christ and the Father should he be retained in the church? And if the church retains him in fellowship is she not also guilty before God?

IT IS SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

If it is adultery for a man to have more than one wife, or a woman to have more than one husband at the same time, is it not spiritual adultery for a man to be connected with two

churches with conflicting creeds? Who can tell which a man loves most when he is living with two women and giving them equal attention? Suppose a man just married should say to his new spouse: "Darling I love you better than anything in the world. (A lie so often told.) You are the idol of my heart; there is no one on earth comparable with you, but darling there's another woman across the city that I love some, but not like I love you, darling. Now wouldn't it be all right for me to take some of the goods that belong to you and carry them to her, darling?" Our brethren who belong to the lodge say that the church comes first with them, but how do we know that he is not telling the other woman the same thing? Have we not proven that masonry is "another woman"?

IT WILL NOT LET YOU OBEY GOD.

"Bring all your tithes in the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, saith the Lord." (Mal. III;10). How can it be done if there is "another woman" to support?

I have heard it reported that a certain church will not deal with one of her members who belongs to the lodge because he is more liberal in his support of the church and pastor than any other member. I do not believe it. Surely no church, Judas-like, would sell her Christ for a few pieces of silver.

UNEQUALLY YOKED.

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness.' (II Cor. VI;14).

This quotation from Paul finds its counterpart in Deuteronomy, 22nd chapter and 10th

verse: "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and ass together."

The ox, whether mentioned in the Old Testament or in the New, is always a type of the minister of Christ. The other animal may represent the other crowd. Judge Daniel H. Whitney, who was once Worshipful Master of the Lodge at Belvidere, Illinois, but who was afterwards converted, revealed no lodge secrets when he delivered himself of the following facts: "A masonic lodge is the strangest medley of ministers and murderers, deacons and libertines, church members and gamblers, decent men and loafers, drunkards and rowdies, that the All-Seeing Eye ever looked down upon." Come out of it brother.

LODGE IS ANTI-CHRIST.

The Masonic Fraternity is anti-Christ in spirit, constitution, laws, principle and forms. But the greatest proof of its awful antagonism to Christ is, that while Christ commanded Christianity to be preached in "all the world," "to every creature", the Lodge swears its members to "conceal" Masonry in all the world, from every creature but themselves, on pain of death, by mangling and mutilation.

CHRIST, THE GREAT BUILDER

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. (Jno. 1;1, 2, 3.) "ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM", but the Lodge calls their unknown God "The Grand Architect of the Universe", yet He is excluded at the door of the Lodge.

THE DIFFERENCE

“Christianity places men in the church as equals in Christ. Masonry packs them in higher and lower degrees in the Lodge. The law of Christ is the “perfect law of liberty”, whose highest penalty is withdrawal of love and fellowship. The law of the Lodge is unreasoning obedience, and its penalty, death. No appeal lies from the local Lodgemaster, to his lodge; and their standard lexicon declares, “The edicts of a Grand Lodge must be obeyed without examination!” And men, freemen, submit to such laws, as burglars, bandits, and brigands obey their laws for the sake of the clan. The brotherhood of Christianity is based on regeneration and love; that of the Lodge on oaths, imprecations and terror. Christianity abolished the Jewish distinction against women. The Lodge retains and intensifies them. It swears its members never to initiate women. Then, also, Christ’s Gospel is preeminently for the poor. But the Lodge excludes the poor. It receives its members for money and drops them when they cease to pay.” (Address of President J. Blanchard at Pittsburg, June 9th, 1875.)

The difference is the same as between Christ and anti-Christ. How inconsistent for one to be a member of both!

From Mackey’s Ritualist, page 214).

MASONIC SONG.

“Hail Masonry divine,
Glory of ages shine;
Long may’st thou reign!
Where’er thy Lodges stand,
May they have great command;
Thou are divine.

CHRISTIAN SONG.

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all.”

Masonry claims to be divine without any Christ.

Jesus Christ is divine without any masonry.

Which will you take brother? Unless you have two minds, two hearts and two souls you cannot take both. Take your choice.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHURCH SOVEREIGNTY.

Church sovereignty was one of the issues involved in the division between the “Old Liners” and “Progressives” about twenty years ago. I felt then and still feel that our Old Line brethren were extreme in the position they took on the question. They insisted that no church had any right to adopt any custom which was not in general accord with all the other churches about them, even tho that custom stood uncondemned in the word of God. For this reason they set up bars of non-fellowship against us because some of our churches wanted instrumental music. They also set up bars against us for holding meetings longer than three days. This was all wrong. God’s law was not violated in either case. Where, in the Bible will we find it? And if these things were wrong would not God have said so in His word? If it had been as objectionable to the Lord as it appeared to be with our brethren would He not have condemned it? And if He did condemn it where do we find it?

But on the secret order question some of our Progressive brethren are seeking to carry us to the other extreme. They say we fought our fight on church sovereignty and won, therefore

any church has a right to receive secret orders if she wishes and all others must allow her that privilege, because she is a "sovereign". If this argument had been brought at that time we would all have been Old Liners on that particular point, because the Old Liners and Progressives were agreed on the secret order question at that time; and this is proven by the fact that the Old Liners made no complaint against us on that question.

The secret order trouble is one that has arisen among the Progressives SINCE the division. And now we are asked to keep quiet on the question and let every church have secret orders who want them, and let us all go along in fellowship. And this, it is now claimed is church Sovereignty. I deny it.

No church has a sovereign right to violate the law of God. And if she does she cannot expect her sister churches to also violate God's law in order to be in fellowship with her.

Each individual church may renounce the faith upon which she was constituted, she may unite with the Roman Catholic church, but does this mean that my church must receive her into, her communion? This is absurd and unscriptural.

I agree that every church has a sovereign right to manage her own internal affairs upon which God's word is silent, and against which there is no violation. But when she goes further and takes a position that is in violation of God's word all other churches are equally guilty with her when they carry that church in their communion. Must my church violate her own understanding of the law of God on a vital point to be in fellowship when there is no fellowship? I am sure this is wrong, and I have never so understood church sovereignty, neither did our

brethren at large understand it this way when it was being discussed.

The question therefore, is, **IS SECRET OR-
DERISM A VITAL QUESTION.** I have already answered this question in the foregoing pages. I have shown that Freemasonry is a religion without a Christ. I have proven it by their own authors. I have proven by the same authority that it is a religion of works—one that saves. I have shown that a Christian minister cannot pray in the name of Jesus Christ in a masonic lodge among his Jewish brethren without giving offense to them and violating masonic law. I have shown that it is an idolatrous religion because of its system of sun worship. In short, I have proven that it is everything that the church of God **IS NOT**, and that its objects and purposes are at direct antipodes with the faith, doctrine, purposes and hopes of God's grand old church. So much so that it is impossible for any Primitive Baptist to be both at the same time. And if we as a church can do so consistently, what is it we cannot fellowship with equal consistency?

No, if any of our brethren think that our churches are going to be drawn away into the masonic camp upon the plea of church sovereignty they are doomed to find themselves rudely mistaken in their guess.

Let the reader remember what I have said above—that the secret order question has been revived **SINCE** the division with the Old Liners; and let them remember that those who have revived it and have quietly encouraged it are the ones who are wholly responsible for present conditions. I have been brought under censure because I have dared to condemn such a step from the pulpit—something I would never have been called upon to do if our brethren had kept

out of it. Nor would this little book ever have been printed if our brethren had not tried to draw us away into the camps of Babylon. Yet an insidious effort is being made to impress our people (whose cause I have espoused and am trying to defend), that I am the cause of our present disturbed condition. Let us keep the record straight. I am *defending* what has been law among our people from time immemorial, and all our brethren know it. I am not the aggressor, but am fighting on the defense. If our brethren think differently let them cease their inroads among us—let them retrace their steps back a few years when Primitive Baptists WERE Primitive Baptists, when they did not and would not fellowship the “unfruitful works of darkness” and see how soon we can all lay down the sword and have peace once more.

But if they will not do this then let the world know that they, NOT I, nor the brethren and churches who stand with me, are the aggressors and that the whole responsibility rests upon them, no matter what the outcome may be. For myself I am free to say that I shall never be quiet and see my people go to their death, as all of them have done who have taken this course.

If our brethren who have tried and are trying to fasten secret orders upon us, will not purge themselves of what they have already in their membership, while they encourage others to come, then let me tell them plainly, once for all, that another division is bound to come soon or late. You cannot mix Christ with anti-Christ and expect to live in peace together. If there-fore, the fellowship of secret orders is more precious to them than the fellowship and peace of the church of God this is a matter entirely their own, but they cannot expect the rank

and file of the Primitive Baptist Churches to follow them into such heresy.

“Let brotherly love continue.” (Heb. XIII; 1).

Does this command extend only to each local church? or does it reach the entire brotherhood of churches? If it be confined to each local church and extends no farther, then it would seem that no church is required to labor for the general peace of all the churches, and each local church may do what she pleases with impunity, and with a total disregard as to the effect of her doing among others.

But if it extends to the entire brotherhood (and assuredly it does) does it not follow that when a church commits an act unauthorized by the word of God, knowing at the same time that her sister churches cannot fellowship it, is she not violating this text?

I am not speaking of immaterial things, but things so material that she knows that her sister churches cannot and will not fellowship them. When a church takes such a step is she not saying, in effect, that she cares nothing for the feelings of the brotherhood beyond the confines of her own local organization?

And is there a Primitive Baptist Church in the South who does not know that the denomination has stood opposed to secret order affiliation? Are they not walking away from the fellowship of the denomination with their eyes open.

Brethren PLEASE “let brotherly love continue”.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

“When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man, shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I

require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.” (Ezk. XXXIII; 8, 9).

What ever the effect of this little work—whatever may be the words of praise—whatever may be the denunciations and anathemas that may be spoken against me, GOD knows the above text has been the ruling power within my soul which has caused me to write. He knows that I have not sought to please nor displease anyone. I have only sought to please God and to appease my own conscience.

If what I have written shall be blessed and sanctified of God to the good of His dear people, I shall feel rewarded for all the tears I have shed over the possibilities of another war and of another unholy and unwarranted division. If my GOD will only bless it to the opening of the eyes of His people at this time, I can joyfully forget all the hard things that I have carried or shall carry. But if, on the other hand, I shall never see any real good that has come of it I shall still feel that I have done my duty to my people, and that it is right before God. The above text clearly proves that such may be true—that warning may go unheeded, and that God’s people may “perish in their iniquity”, but the servant that gives them faithful warning has “delivered his soul”. I feel the power of this truth in my heart as I bring this little message of warning to its close.

The secret order evil has not only made stealthy advancement in our good old church, and is bringing threats pregnant with destruction to our peace as a denomination, it has not only engulfed nearly all other denominations, so that they cannot now turn back if they wished, but

it has grown to such enormous proportions that the very foundations of our federal government is being menaced. The power of secret orderism is slyly, but surely controlling the politics of this country. Every Georgian, who has kept abreast with political events in Georgia during the last few years knows the truth of this statement. They know that Ku Kluxism, enterlocked with other secret order influences, was the one capital thing that put our present Governor into office. I do not say this because I am not a friend to Clifford Walker, for I am, and he knows it, but I am saying it because it is truth.

I do not charge that Governor Walker made an unlawful bid for such support, for I do not believe he did. But the manly way in which his opponent, Governor Hardwick, expressed himself on the evils of Ku Kluxism turned the tables against him and in favor of Walker, and proved to be Hardwick's waterloo. I have never been a very consistent Hardwick man, but his manliness in crying out against a known evil at the peril of his own political fortunes is certainly to be commended. I love a man who is A MAN.

The same is true of Senator Underwood. His frank and open manner of denouncing Ku Kluxism has cost him the State of Georgia, which was rightfully his, and almost the entire solid South as well. It is not therefore, a question of merit or fitness for office any more, but to know how to manage and manipulate the secret order monster. Such conditions bode no good for our government.

But I am mostly concerned for the welfare of God's old church, to whom I have given the best part of my manhood, and for whose welfare I shall, under God, continue to labor until my work is ended.

My frankness and boldness in saying what I

knew was God's divine truth has caused some of my brethren with whom I have spent many sweet hours in worship, and who once entertained the same position for which I am now contending, to turn away from me coldly, and quietly say things about me that has caused others to hold me in doubt. But what I have done has brought peace into my soul. I would not now take a different course if I could.

It is claimed that there are very few affiliating masons among the old Baptists of Georgia, and that "brother Simms is unduly alarmed and has grown "nuttty" on the subject". Maybe so. But let me call attention to the Lord's word once more: "A LITTLE leaven leavens the whole lump." If there was but the one single mason among us in the entire State, and if the denomination carried that one man in peaceable fellowship would we not be opening the door to ten thousand more just like him? Such discipline—the retention of one man—is the equivalent of saying to all who will, "Come on, we will take you," and under such discipline they are coming.

I know that there are not very many affiliating masons among us, but there are many more than we are asked to believe, and the seed that is beng sown promises another serious war if not another division.

I plead for faithfulness among our people, and especially among our ministers. For as I love manhood in the political world, so do I love it and plead for it in the church of God.

When Solomon was ready to die his dying words to his son David, was: "I go the way of all the earth, be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself A MAN". I feel impressed to adopt these words as my own as I appeal to our ministers for faithfulness. If a thing is wrong SAY SO; if it is right DEFEND it. I

have before proven from the Saviour's own words that what is not right is wrong. "He that is not with me is against me." Do not think you can be on both sides of a question and enjoy the fellowship of God, nor live very long in the confidence of your most intimate friends. "He that would save his life shall lose it, and he that would lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall find it." A both-sided, fence-straddling, milk-and-cider sort of a man is unreliable, and unsafe, whether in the civil government of the country or the spiritual government of God, and sooner or later, will be weighed in the balance and found wanting.

Brother minister, if in your heart you feel that God will be honored by opening the doors to secret orders, SAY SO, and say it upon the house-top. Such honesty will command the respect of every one, even though they differ with you. Do not say it in private homes and then add: "If you ever tell it I'll deny it." But if you feel that it is a step downward and away from God, SAY SO, though the heavens fall. Only such a minister can be worth anything to the church of God. But let us be careful to say it IN THE FEAR OF GOD. Never use Peter's sword. You may do the right thing in the wrong spirit and God will not be pleased.

Brethren let me plead with you to "lift up your eyes and look on the fields." Survey the prevailing conditions throughout Christendom today. Take an inventory of the acts and doings of this religious (?) world, and you will find that not only has there been a compromise and a complete sell out of Jesus Christ in fellowshiping secret orderism, but, this step being taken, it is easy to take and KEEP every other evil known to the catalogue of crime. You will find that the most popular churches of today are the ones who have gone the greatest dis-

tance from Christ and His blessed teaching. Look, and you can but see the medley of unbelievers, good men and good women and crooks, together with the mongrel fellowship (?) of all kinds of secret orders—all like a whirling, muddy stream, rushing down the falls into the service of Satan.

But there are among them men and women who are heart sick with their surroundings, and casting around their weary eyes in search of a people “whose God is the Lord”, whose worship is simple and pure, whose lives are above reproach and whose gospel feeds the hungry soul. And when they turn their eyes toward the Primitive Baptists will they see us leaning toward the very things from which they so much desire to be free? Or shall we keep a clean house for the Lord, and thus invite them to go with us?

It is well known to most of us that by far the greater part of our membership are just such as these—those who have come to us from other organizations. But if we now turn and pattern after the other organizations—pander to the world for popularity at the expense of Jesus Christ and the simplicity of His worship, do we not close the door against them? Is this not the very reason why our churches have lost in number where they have done so? And why they have gained where there have not done so?

I do not think there was ever a greater opportunity for development and growth among Primitive Baptists, if only they would content themselves to be as God intended—a separate people from the world—living godly lives, and preaching the pure doctrines of grace that feeds the hungry soul. This done, and we shall see that God, as in olden times, will “add to the church such as should be saved”, and we shall

have the joys of God's salvation, and the peace that "passeth understanding".

The dear Lord add His blessing.

AMEN.

APPENDIX

THE SITUATION IN ATLANTA.

The publication of local church troubles are never pleasant, and are often unprofitable. However, as the trouble here is directly, and unseparably connected with the condition of affairs throughout the State, and as many have gotten a wrong impression of what has been done here, I deem it highly important that our brethren everywhere should know the truth.

The Glazener Memorial church, of which I am a member and pastor, has been, from her organization, established in her position on the secret order question. Her position has been, and is now, the same as I have tried to set forth in this little work, and which has been the position of nine-tenths of our people throughout the South, i. e., they will not carry Freemasonry in their fellowship, nor any other secret order whose religion conflicts with the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But we had some dissenters who opposed the policy of Primitive Baptists on this question, and when the church was forced to exclude a man who was a member of the Lodge, six of our members failed to vote with the church in his exclusion, although he let the church know very plainly that he preferred membership with the Lodge rather than with the church. Later nine of our members who were not satisfied with the action of the church, went away from us, constituted themselves into another church a few blocks away, called Elder Blackwell to serve them, and have not only taken all the secret order people who have presented themselves, but

have restored the one who was excluded by the Glazener Memorial church.

Such is the situation at present. There is no fellowship between the two churches, for my church feels that when they restored our excluded member they automatically placed themselves in the same position he was—out of our fellowship. He lives but a few blocks from the church that excluded him, and to recognize the church of his present membership with us would be to repudiate the act of our own church in excluding him. How could we receive him into our communion since our minutes show him to be an excluded man?

This, in short, is the trouble. Some of the members of the new church deny that he was excluded—that we only “recinded him out at his own request”. But our minutes tell a different story, and all who were present know that he WAS excluded.

But if there was no such tangle with the man in question, it is undeniable that the new church takes all secret order people without question or restriction (and they have quite a few) while my church has only taken the well-beaten path of our church ever since there has been any Primitive Baptists in the State. Our people cannot say we are wrong without saying that our old church has been wrong all the while. Will they do it? I think not. Will they say Elder Blackwell’s church is wrong. We shall see.

Our brethren abroad should take cognizance of the situation here, for the division has already come in Atlanta, and I hope there may be something done that will confine our troubles here, and that it will not spread over the denomination and divide our poor old church again. However, the Glazener Memorial church

cannot, will not carry secret orders in her fellowship, nor can she fellowship in others right at her door what she cannot fellowship in her own body.

It has been charged that I have precipitated this division in Atlanta. I answer that if contending for what the denomination has always contended for in the South has brought the division then I am guilty. But it would appear that the parties who would fasten secret orderism upon the denomination are alone responsible for the trouble.

May God save us from ourselves, I pray.

A. V. S.

